(15.)

THE SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT

Arraigned and Condemned

By the ſentence of the Divines of *London* and *Cheſhire*.

Delivered in their reſpective Queries and defenſive Doubts and Reaſons, touching the Oath printed with an *&c.* by the miſtake of the tranſcriber.

The reaſon of the firſt writing and the preſent publication hereof is rendred to the Reader in the Epiſtle.

By *Laurence Womock* now D.D. and Arch-Deacon of *Suffolk*.

Joſhua 22. 17.
From which we are not cleanſed to this day.

LONDON,

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BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

THE PREFACE TO THE READER.

READER,

THese papers penn'd 12. or 13. yeers since, and upon this occasion. It was told me by one of the Committee. That they would not suffer any man to breath in that County (where I then lived) unless he did take The Solemn League and Covenant.

This awakened me to a sense of my unsafe condition, and to a present care to provide against it. I considered that I could not comply with this Requiry, but I must be guilty of a foul Apostaly from my own principles; and together with the interest of my Gracious Prince and dear Mother-Church, I must betray the integrity and peace of mine own Conscience.

On the other side, though I knew it could be no prejudice to a good Cause to be silent under our sufferings for

it, (after the example of our great Master, who who was led like a Sheep to the Slaughter, and as a lamb dumb before the Shearer, so opened he not his mouth;) yet I concluded, that to shew a good Reason for my non submission in this case, if it did not allay the rigour of the Imposers *of this* Covenant, *it would be a huge satisfaction to my selfe, and the bosome of my Relations, and might probably conduce to the animation and settlement of such as were like to come under the like fiery triall with my selfe.*

Hereupon I call'd to mind what I had read by way of contradiction to impositions of this kind; And having then by me the Quere's *of sundry Divines of the* Diocesse *of* London *and the parts adjacent, and the* Defensive Doubts and Reasons *of some of the* Clergy *of* Cheshire *(drawn up by* Mr. Ley *of* Budworth *touching that* Oath *injoyned by the (then) late Synod &c. I resolved presently to review* Them, *and examine whether the very same objections, which* They *had raised against that* Oath, *might not with equall, if not more advantage be made against this* Covenant. *I had not travailed far with this design, before I perceived clearly that it might be accomplish'd with facility and expedition. This gave me incouragement to address my selfe unto the work, which was timely finished, just as it lyes before thee, without any the least addition or alteration.*

Having thus turned the point of their weapons upon their own bosomes, I thought my self secure; for I could see no reason in the world, but that such arguments as would serve their turn at one time might indifferently serve ours upon a like occasion.

The Copy beeing read by some friends, I was with some earnestness desired to make it publick. To that purpose it

was sent to Mr. F. A. a Stationer in Worcester; But while he delayed to get it printed, the Oxford Reasons came forth, which (in Conjunction with some other Emergencies of providence) gave a seasonable check to the Presbyterians party, and put the Covenant to silence.

Had these papers been put forth in such a juncture of affaires, they would have been look'd upon as a thing born out of due time; and upon this consideration they were left to sleep in the Stationers hands, where they have lain ever since, and were awakened upon this occasion.

Beeing in London, I found that the Covenant, which had many yeares ago been laid aside, (as an Almanack out of date) by some of the first contrivers, was now revived, and began to be pleaded to very evill purposes, and thrown, as a stumbling block, before Them, who had lately expreſt some forward inclinations to return into the wayes of peace.

All this while, I observed little, or no notice taken of those many irrefragable Arguments, which have been produced against it, nor much care used to inculcate them, in order to the countermining of the insinuations of those deceitfull workers upon such loose grounds.

Whereupon I endeavoured to retreve these papers; and (the party being dead, into whose hands they were at first committed) I wrote a note to one, whom I thought most likely to give an account of them.

Having made some search after them, they came at last into his hands, and within a few dayes he returnd them to me, with the Approbation of that pious and learned Person, Mr. E. Simmons, to whom, it seems he had delivered them to be perused. When

When I had received them, I was very desirous to be satisfied, by a better judgment, whether they might be serviceable, in any measure, to abate the animosities, or discountenance the pretensions of those men, whom, I supposed, to stand to stifly upon the legality and tye of this ingagement.

To this end I submitted them to the examination of a very worthy and learned friend, upon whose incouragement they are now sent forth into the light.

If the iniquity of those times (wherein they were written) have prevailed with me, to let fall any thing contrary to the judgment of my lawfull Superiours, *or any thing that seems to intrench, in any particular, upon the Church of* England *by law established, I do heartily retract it.*

And for such of the Clergy, *as have been* Promoters *of this* Covenant, *I do most earnestly beseech them, to reflect upon their former* Principles, Oathes, *and* Subscriptions, *that remembring* from whence they are fallen, *They may, without any more procrastination, apply themselves* to do their first workes; *least otherwise they verify that sad observation of a very Reverend Person, (hereafter mentioned.) That* They *(who had ingaged themselves in that League)* had covenanted against Repentance. *Remember whence fallen: and repent, and do first workes; lest otherwise* &c.

ERRATA.

Pag. 6. l. 30. r. *Ashbury.* P. 10 l. 12. after, (prayer,) r. (especially those Homilies again Rebellion) which p. 18. l. 8. r. which p. 22. l 12. r. Oblger, p. 25. l. 18. r. *Cum regnabant*, and l. 31. r. His, p. 30. l. 18. r. Contrived; and by, p. 32. l. 12. r. Lord, and l. 21. r. Precedents, p. 37. l. 9. r. be a, p. 51. l. 22. blot out (only] p. 53. l. 11. r. Cannot, p. 57. l. 6. decree.

The mispointing and literall faults are referred to the ingenuity of the Reader.

THE SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT

Arraigned and condemned &c.

THis Covenant being ſealed with ſo profound an impre-
cation, *viz.*[a] "That we make it in the preſence of Al-
"mighty God, the ſearcher of all hearts, with a true
"intention to perform the ſame, as we ſhall anſwer
"at that great Day, when the ſecrets of all hearts ſhall be diſ-
"cloſed. Before we do ſo ſolemnly engage our ſoules in
pawn for the obſervation of it, it cannot but in reaſon be ſup-
poſed, that our judgments ſhould be clearly convinced, and our
conſciences ſecurely acquieſce in a full aſſurance, that the con-
tents thereof are lawfull, expedient, and neceſſary.

The leaſt cauſe of heſitation or ſcruple herein adminiſtred,
ſerveth for a ſufficient warrant to juſtifie a demurre in our obe-
dience, and the leaſt ambiguity (*which muſt not crow'd into an
oath,*) [b] or obſcurity in any particular of requiry, (till unclou-
ded,) is a competent ground for ſuch an heſitation; and there-
fore according to the opinion of the Reverend profeſſors of

[a] At the end of the Covenant.

[b] *Lond.* Divines quer. 3. and 6.

b See Mr. *Ley's* Defens. Doubts &c. p. 1. and 2.

Aberdane c "We ought to judge of thoſe things we are to "ſwear to, with the ſtrict and inquiſitive judgment of verity, "and to ponder duly, and to propound particularly and fully "to others (eſpecially to thoſe who require our Oath) to ſa-"tisfy our conſciences thereanent, and to anſwer all the "Doubts, and Reaſons, which make us unwilling and affraid "to give our aſſent thereto.

As we have the judgment of thoſe Profeſſors, for our incouragement, ſo have we likewiſe the concurrent practice "of "ſundry of the Clergy of the Dioceſs of *London*, and parts ad-"jacent in their Queres touching the *Oath* injoyned by the ſixt *Canon* of the late *Synod*, and of ſome of the ableſt *Divines* of *Cheſhire* (Mr. *Ley* being choſen to draw up their doubts to that purpoſe) *d* for a precedent.

d In his letter of the occaſion and prefixt to that work.

Upon theſe grounds we take this preſent confidence, to let the world ſee there are ſo many doubts emergent from this Covenant, (if we examine the contents of it by the principles of thoſe *Divines*) that we cannot with ſerene and calm boſomes ſubſcribe to it.

I. *General Doubt.*

"Whether this Covenant may be taken in faith, without "which the taking of it is Sinne? *Rom.* 14. 23.

The Reaſon.

e Mr. *Ley ubi ſupra* P. 11.

Becauſe (to uſe Mr. *Ley's* words) *e* It comprehendeth "ſo many things of ſeveral kinds (and diverſe of them un-"known unto moſt of us) that though we be ready to be-"lieve, and receive ſome of them ſingle, our faith cannot fa-"dom them altogether; and ſo we cannot ſwear without "doubting: and if doubtfull ſwearing be as dangerous as "doubtfull eating (as we conceive it is, and ſo may fear we "may be damned for it by the doom of the Apoſtle in the "fore-cited place) we can neither with confidence, nor ſafety "take this Covenant, untill we be better reſolved of the true "meaning thereof; *Thus he.*

This

This Doubt is much improv'd, if we conſider how ambiguous the ſenſe of this *Covenant* is rendred by thoſe differences and diſputes that have been and are ſtill on foot touching the conſtruction of it. Inſomuch that the *Houſe* of *Commons* in their Declaration of the 17 of *April* 1646. thought it requiſite to put in a timely Caveat on that behalf, which is expreſt in theſe words, *v.z.* "And (we) do preſume, no interpreta-"tion of it [*the Covenant*] ſo far as it ſhall concern the King-"dom of *England*, ſhall by any be indeavoured to be impoſed "on us, other than we our ſelves do know to be ſuitable to "the firſt juſt ends for which it was agreed; and we do expect "that the people of *England* ſhould not receive impreſſions of "any forced conſtructions of that Covenant; *f* And yet the Kingdom of *Scotland* (who are acknowledged to be united unto *England*, as *one intire body to proſecute this cauſe*, and therefore Competent *Judges* of the ſenſe of that *league* by which they ſtand ſo *united*; (for if they do not conſent in the interpretation and meaning of thoſe grounds and principles; upon which, and of thoſe ends and intentions for which it was framed and founded, how could they concurre and cooperate as *one entire body* in the proſecution of it) that Kingdom ſeems by their *Commiſſioners* to inforce the ſenſe of ſome paſſages of it to ſuch purpoſes as the *Houſe* of *Commons* will not allow of, the *Lords* in the interim reſerving their ſenſe, which hath rather created new Doubts in us, than taken away or leſſened the old ones. And though theſe differences in judgment be ſouldered for the preſent, we have no faith in the perpetuall duration of a Silver-Cement, and therefore we think it very fit that all the Doubts and difficulties emergent from this *Covenant* ſhould be reſolv'd and cleer'd by an expoſition made and agree'd upon by that *entire body*, which did Originally introduce it, that ſuch as have a mind to be *medling* with *change*, may take it without doubting, and ſecure the *impoſers* of their reall intentions to perform it in ſuch a ſenſe as is required of them.

f The anſwer of the Commons to the *Scots* papers of 28. *November* 1646. p. 23. The papers in anſwer to the votes of the 24. of *September* 1646.

2. General Doubt.

g Mr. Ley P. 3. "Whether g the taking this Covenant, be not a taking the "Name of God in vain, against the third Commandment?

The Reason.

Because we conceive it to be superfluous and altogether useless, in regard so many sundry judgments are ingaged in it, and so many different senses excogitated and imposed upon it, that it cannot put *an end to all strife*. If the *Presbyterian* vote one interpretation, such, as they call *Independants* (in favour of their own party ingaged in it) may resolve another; insomuch that their already notorious differences have made it evident, that unless the *equivocation* of the sense be taken away by some authentike explication, no man can be secure that others, under the Obligation of the same Covenant, will concurre in opinion or practise with him.

3. General Doubt.

b Mr. Ley P. 11. h "Whether this Covenant hath not croft the cheife end, "whereat the contrivers aimed?

The Reason.

Because we conceive the prime end intended was the setling of *unity* and *uniformity* in matters of Religion, for a more firm and everlasting concord in the three Kingdomes; and how this *Covenant* hath sorted to this end, we appeal to the General and sad experience of the temper of these times; for since the late *Government* was suspended, (and by this *Covenant* abolished) all men (notwithstanding their engagements) upon the pretended discovery of some new light, have taken liberty

liberty to advance their private opinions, and (since the complaints of the weight of the Bishops *Loines* were made so loud) are not grown so much in love with *the yoake of bondage*, as to thrust themselves under the pressure of the *Presbyterians fingers*.

If that be urged for the imposition of this *Covenant*, which is supposed to be a reason, why they of *Geneva* had need of an Oath, *viz. because the Discipline* (then to be introduced) *was said to be a new fangled Discipline of* Calvin's *devising*, [i] and therefore had need of an Oath to strengthen their *new* invented Government: We dare not upon such grounds ingage our selves in a Solemn *Covenant*, but think it safer to expect the issue of all such *new* designes with patience, according to that sound resolution of *Gamaliel*. *Act.* 5. 38, 39.

[i] Mr. *Ley* p. 114, 115.

If it be said, that in these times there is such division and distraction among us, that there is need to fasten us together by such a sacred bond.

"We think it reasonable, to reply (in Mr. *Ley's* [k] words) [k] p. 6.
"That neither the want of such an Oath was the cause of the "distemper of the times, nor that the urging of it will be a "Convenient cure thereof; but rather the contrary: since "there is more agreement betwixt peace and love, which may "best be preserved, where offensive things are not urged; than "betwixt love and compulsion, especially, if (as of this Oath "it is conceived) it incroach upon the Conscience, without "any great need (as from them that require it) or without "sufficient ground to satisfy such as should receive it. Thus Mr. *Ley*, and he goes on.

"If (sayes he) we may judge by the operation (it hath upon "some persons) it is like rather to exasperate the disease than "cure it. And we conceive the less need hereof (saith he) be- "cause as our learned and religious brethren of *Aberdene* have "observed, there be other meanes more effectuall for hol- "ding out of Popery, and effecting" (not an hypocriticall and outside, which is all that can be wrought by compulsion) "but (a Cordiall and thorow Reformation) in which we "ought to confide more than in all the united forces of all the "Subjects of this Land, to wit, diligent preaching and teach- "ing of the word, frequent prayer to God, humbling of our "selves before him, and amendment of our Lives and Con-

"versations, and arming our selves against our adversaries, by
"diligent searching of the Scriptures, whereby we may in-
"crease in the knowledg of the truth, and in ability to defend
"it against the enemies of it.

"These have been the cheife meanes to advance both the
"Doctrine of truth, and the Discipline of manners; and they
"will be the best meanes to hold them up still; with them
"there will be no need, without them none aide by Oathes
"of this kind. Thus Mr. *Ley* against that *Oath*. If those were the only meanes then, why not now? Why so much severity, and feirceneſſe in pressing this *Covenant*?

l p. 10. Mr. *Ley* *l* tells us (speaking to the business of that Oath)
"though we doubt not, but diverse, who have taken the Oath,
"be very learned, grave, and godly persons, and have done it
"(as they conceive) with due consideration and good Con-
"science; yet it cannot be denyed, but many may be too for-
"ward to sweare, without any care or use of either, either out
"of hope to be held very heartily affected to those who have
"meanes to promote them (the hope whereof, as *Æneas*
"*Silvius* observed, made more to adhere to the Pope, who
"gave preferments, than to the Councell, who had none to
"give) or out of fear of their disfavour, who have power to
"lay heavy pressures upon them. Thus Mr. *Ley*. We would gladly know at whose disposall all the *preferments* of the Kingdom have been these last yeeres, and whether Mr. *Ley*, since he began to traverse those *Canons*, hath not come off like a skilfull *Canoneer* indeed, having by severall peices of *Ordinance* shot himselfe from *Budworth* up into the Dignity of the *Chaire* amongst the *Assemblers*, and into the profits of that great Living of *Asbeny* in *Cheshire*?

"Our particular Doubts (to follow Mr. *Ley*'s Method) ari-
"sing from the parts of the *Covenant*.

COVENANT.

Article. 1.

"THat we ſhall ſincerely, really, and conſtantly, through "the grace of God, indeavour in our ſeveral places "and callings, the preſervation of the Reformed Religion in "the Church of *Scotland*, in Doctrine, Worſhip, Diſcipline, "and Government.

4. Doubt.

m "What is meant by Diſcipline and Government, whe- m p. 24.
"ther the ſame thing or no? This we borrow from Mr. *Ley*.

The Reaſon.

Becauſe in this Article there is expreſs mention made twiſe of *Diſcipline and Government*, and once of *Church-Government* alone, without the word *Diſcipline*, and in the *Directory* for prayer before Sermon, mention is made (in relation to Church-Officers) of *Diſcipline* only without the word *Government*. We muſt not ſwear uncertainties.

5. Doubt.

"What is meant by thoſe words in our ſeverall places and "callings?

The Reaſon.

Becauſe according to the Common Conſtruction of the words, we ſhould underſtand nothing elſe but that we are to endeavour.

endeavour in our several *rankes* and *stations*, wherein we are set in *Church* or *Common-wealth*: But the *House* of *Commons* (in their answer to the *Scots* papers of *Novemb*. 28. 1646. p. 21, 23, 24.) seem by our *severall places* to understand acting within the *sphere and precincts* of our severall Kingdomes *respectively*, though this Article saith not *respectively* but *mutually*;) and by our *vocation*, such a *call*, as is *duely given us*, (we think they mean) by the two *Houses*, or such as are authorized by them; and so we may tie our selves to endeavour in such a way (if required by their *call*) as is no way suitable to our particular *professions*.

6. Doubt.

"Whether we may safely Covenant the preservation of the "reformed Religion in the Church of *Scotland &c*.

The Reason.

Because we do not know particularly what that Religion is, and how bottom'd, and so cannot sweare in *Judgment* as is required. *Jerem*. 4. 2.

7. Doubt.

"Whether the things here specifyed be propounded to be "allowed *n* in the same, or in a different degree of assent and approbation?

n Mr. *Ley* p. 43.

The Reason.

Because there is no distinction of them in the *Covenant*, but in *Title* and *Order*; and yet there is so much difference between them (in respect of approbation) sayes Mr. *Ley*, *o* that *Discipline in particular is not necessary to Salvation*; (and we may say as much of particular formes of worship) *how then can we*

o p. 31.

we give them (and those in a forreign Church too) "the highest "degree of ratification: when hitherto we were never required "to give more than our subscription to them (no nor to the doctrine) *formerly established in our own*: If the *Discipline* and *Worship* we are to *covenant* constantly to maintain, be commended to us as of *Divine right*, and of equall authority with the *Doctrine*, and *necessary to Salvation*, we must desire better proofes, then have been produced hitherto, that we may be certain it is so, before we can be drawn to *rivet* it into such an unalterable establishment by the sacred bond of a *Covenant*, " and if the assent be intended in a different degree, "how can we compose our Consciences (saith Mr. *Ley*) *p* in *p* Ibid. "one and the same act of swearing, to approve further of the "one than of the other, the words of the Covenant sounding "the same degree of assurance to them both? If then we take "them together, we cannot find how we should avow their "approbation, in one joynt and indistinct asseveration; es- "pecially by *Covenant*.

COVENANT.

"THe Reformation of Religion in the Kingdoms of *Eng-* "*land* and *Ireland*, in Doctrine, Worship, Discipline "and Government, according to the word of God, and ex- "ample of the best Reformed Churches.

8. Doubt.

"Why is it not said, in the Churches of *England* and *Ire-* "*land*, as well, as in the Church of *Scotland*: but in the King- "doms *&c.*

The Reason.

Because it may insinuate an opinion in the *Contrivers*, that we had no *Church* in *England* or *Ireland* before, but

were now in hand, (*by extirpation of Prelacy* &c.) to erect one.

9. Doubt.

" Why we do covenant a Reformation in Doctrine ?

The Reason.

q In his 4. and 5. Doubts.

Because (to continue Mr. *Ley*'s *q* language) though we cannot allow of that construction which " of late hath wrench't them " from their proper Orthodox, and protestant sense, and taught " men of equivocall Consciences to play fast and loose with " them " (and therefore desire the *Homilies* may be inforced, and as well *all the rest*, as those " of the peril of Idolatry, " and of the time and place of prayer, " which in regard of their fullness of expression are not liable to such misinterpretation, yet) we are not satisfyed as to the point of Reformation of the *Articles of Religion*, wherein our *Doctrine* is contained. Because (as the *London Divines* profess in their 3. *Quere*) " We take all things necessary to Salvation to be " contained in those Articles, as grounded on holy Scripture. And Mr. *Ley* did find never a stone of offence to fling at them, when he wrote his *Doubts*, as appears. Pag. 13. and confesseth that " those Doctrines, which are to be received, " and believed of all, were establisht in the Church. p. 47. yea " he thinkes it more reasonable to require *Geneva* (it self) to " receive some Doctrines from us, than we Discipline from " them. Page 113. " and all this he has said since this *Parliament*. Now (besides the scandal of making alterations, where no just ground is minister'd) we have (by our *protestations* of *May*. 5. 1641.) " in the presence of Almighty God, promised, vowed and protested, to maintain and defend the true " Reformed Protestant Religion expressed in the Doctrine of " the Church of *England*; and neither for hope, fear, nor " other respect to relinquish this promise, vow, and protestation, wherein the whole Kingdom stands ingaged untill this " day. The sinfull neglect, whereof, doth (as we may justly " fear)

"fear) open one flood-gate the more to let in all these cala-
"mities upon the Kingdome." Thus the *Assembly* in their exhortation to the taking of the Solemn *League and Covenant*.

10. *Doubt.*

"Why we Covenant the Reformation of Worship, Disci-
"pline and Government?

The Reason.

Because there is an *Ordinance* for the *abolition* of our *worship* (which is contained in our *Leiturgy*) and we *Covenant* (in the Second *article*) the *extirpation* of the *Government*: now we can with no less indiscretion undertake the *Reformation* of that which is *extirpated* and *aboliſhed*, then if a man should undertake to *heale* one that hath his *braines* beaten out, or prune a tree that is grubbed up by the rootes; and the obligation of an Oath would adde profaneſs, if not perjury to our folly. *Abolition* and *extirpation* may make way for the *introduction* of a *new*; but are no way at all to the *Reformation* of the old eſtabliſht *Worship*, *Diſcipline* and *Government*.

COVENANT.

"ACcording to the word of God, and examples of the best
"Reformed Churches.

11. *Doubt.*

"Whether these two are associated, as one Common Rule
"to regulate our whole Reformation by?

The Reason.

Because we do not conceive them to be of equal authority and therefore cannot entertain them (as they seem to be propounded) in the same equipage for regulating our Reformation in *Doctrine* &c. Neither can we expedite our selves of this difficulty, *reddendo singula singulis*; because though the word of God alone be a sufficient *rule* for the Reformation of *Doctrine* (when corrupt) yet *example* alone is not so sufficient for the regulation of *Discipline*. And if that *Discipline* (to be introduced) be commended to us as of *Divine right* (as we perceive it is) we know not why the *examples* of Reformed Churches, should at all be propounded to us; for if it be not clearly proved to be such out of the word of God, we shall never embrace it for such upon the credit of the *best Reformed Churches* extant. We are told, that by no other than *Scripture-examples and such as are obligatory*, matters of Religion become *jure divino*. [*Jus Divin. Regim. Ec.*] r And therefore, if we must go by *example*, we should look a little higher up to the *primitive*, and *Apostles* times, and they that have done so are led into a confident perswasion, that the *Church of England*, as it now stands established by Law, is the *best* of the Reformed; *so farre* (in the judgment of a very learned man, to which we cannot but subscribe) "that if I did not guess (saith "he) s of the sense of the Covenant more by the tenor than "words of the Covenanters, I should think all men, that "have covenanted" to reform after the example of the best reformed Churches, "indispensably obliged to conform to "the King *Edward*, or Queen *Elizabeth* English Reformati-"on, the most regular perfect pattern that *Europe* yieldeth.

r Cap. 4.

s View of the Directory c. 1. Sect. 9.

COVENANT.

"AND shall endeavour to bring the Churches of God in "the three Kingdomes to the neerest Conjunction and "uniformity &c. from whence with reflection upon the for-"mer clause ariseth the

11.

12. Doubt.

" Whether the Church of *Scotland* be look't upon as the " best reformed, and whether we be obliged to conform „ to it?

The Reason.

Because, if it be look't upon as the most exact and perfect form, why is there any more debate? Why is not that *neerest conjunction and uniformity* established, which is Covenanted to be indeavoured? If it be not the best, why do we (in the great work of a generall Reformation) *Covenant* to *preserve* and not leave a liberty to *reform* that likewise? And if we find a better *example* to Copy out, whether are we bound to press *Scotland* to write after us? If we be not, how can we satisfy our Consciences that we endeavour the *neerest Conjunction, and uniformity*, as we are obliged? If we be bound to press them to a further Reformation to bring them to an *uniformity*, how shall we perform our Covenant, *to preserve their Religion in Doctrine* &c. as it now stands Reformed?

COVENANT.

" THat we, and our Posterity after us, may as brethren, live " in faith and love, and the Lord may delight to dwell in " the midst of us.

13. Doubt.

" Whether particular Churches may not live in faith and " love, and the Lord delight to dwell in the midst of them " without such a neer Conjunction and uniformity in the said particulars?

The Reason.

Because the words seem to imply they cannot; and we are very unwilling to give such offence to other Protestant Churches, as to involve them within that uncharitable implication, that they neither hold Communion with God, nor among themselves. If this inference be not intended, why is that propounded as the only end of that *nearest Conjunction and Uniformity*?

COVENANT.

2. Article.

"That we shall in like manner, without respect of persons, "endeavour the extirpation of Popery, Prelacy &c.

14. Doubt.

"What is meant by Popery?

The Reason.

t 4. Doubt p. 32. Because (as Mr. *Ley* t sayes of the *Popish Doctrine*, so we may say of *Popery* in generall) "It is not yet determined in any "satisfactory way (at least not so determined that we may "sweare to it) what is to be esteemed Popery.

If it be objected, That the *abjuration* of Popery in the *Covenant* is generall, and so the fitter for such as are zealous Protestants to take it.

u Ibid. p. 36. Mr. *Ley* shall answer for us: "It is true (saith he) u If "zeal without knowledge were sufficient; but it is necessary "they should first know what Popery is, and what is not be- "fore they renownce it by swearing. And the swearing it "without

"without knowing it, hath made some to abjure all Episcopa-
"cy as taking (and therein mistaking) it (as we conceive) to
"be no other than the Goverment of Popery, and some have
"concluded Popery upon the Presbyterery, thus [w] Mr. *Lay*. [w] Ibidem.

And the same *Author*, in his "Sunday a Sabbath, saith, [x] [x] In the
"There is Sinister zeal in some against Superstition, which Preface.
"proveth many times prejudiciall to the practice of Religion;
"For (as our late learned *Soveraign* hath observed) under
"colour of weeding out superstition, it will pluck up by the
"roots many plants of Paradise." We see it is a light matter (in these dayes) for the *Articles* of the *Ancient Creedes* to be charg'd with the guilt of *Popery*.

15. *Doubt.*

"Whether we may with a safe Conscience Covenant the
"extirpation of Prelacie (that is Church-Government. *&c.*

The Reason.

1. Because (besides it's establishment in this Realm by *Magna Charta*) the *King* hath taken a Solemn *Oath* to preserve it, and hath expreſt earnest desires and stedfast resolutions to do so, and in Order hereunto refuseth to sign the *Covenant*. And if the plea of a tender Conscience be of any force, surely his *Majesty* may with a great deal more reason alledge that to justify his refusall, than his *Subjects* can *Covenant* (contrary to his expres command) and then press such a voluntary obligation against it.

2. If the *Reformation* of Religion by force, and the subjects *resistance* of manifest *Oppression* and *Tyranny* to recover and secure their undoubted rights, and establisht Priviledges be so questionable (as to very many godly and learned men it is) surely then it must needes be farre from safety (especially where the least scruple is) to adventure upon a *Covenant* for the utter *eradication*, of so considerable a piece of *Government* so anciently establisht, and for the imposition of a new one which (if obtained) (should pass as an Act of Grace) by co-

acting

acting an unwilling *Prince*, who offers *a thorough Reformation*; And, as we conceive this a derogation to his *Majesties* Honour and Authority (which we *covenant* in the third Article to defend) so we cannot but think the teaching of any *Prince* (so unwilling to learn) the way to *violate* his Oath in so eminent a piece of *Establishment* is a very dangerous precedent and temptation to *him* and his *Posterity* (if ever God puts an advantage into their hands) to make the whole body of *Magna Charta* a *Holocaust* to their revenge and fury.

3. This *Doubt* is yet improved by a particular consideration of the *Church Officers* to be *extirpated*; For Mr. *Ley* and the *London Divines* (Quere the 5th.) find not the same reason of not consenting to the alteration of Government by *Deanes* and *Arch-Deacons*, as there is of not consenting to alter that of *Bishops*; and so we may find greater reason to dissent from *Covenanting* the *eradication* of the one, than of the other. For Bishops, Dr. *Willet* [y] have acknowledged *somewhat in their calling to be Divine and Apostolicall*; Monsieur *Deodate* Professour of *Geneva* (it seemes) hath declared himself by an Epistle penn'd very much in *their* favour; and *Spanhemius* hath a very honourable esteem of them, as appeares in the Epistle Dedicatory of his *Dub. Evangel.* to the most pious and learned *Primate* of *Armagh*, and Mr. *Ley* [z] allowes them a meet and moderate imparity, and *Calvin* himself, [a] while he disputes against the Tyranny of *Popish Prelates*, He sayes, "*Si veri essent Episcopi*, he would grant them, *aliquid authoritatis, non quantum sibi postulant, sed quantum ad politiam Ecclesiæ rite ordinandam requiritur.*

[y] Mr. Ley p. 67.

[z] p. 20. and see p. 76. out of Chamier.

[a] Instit. lib. c. 10. Sect. 6.

If that which is said against the *Divine and Apostolicall* right of *Episcopacy*, be so much, that if it serve not to induce a deniall of that high and holy claym may (as Mr. *Ley* [b] saith) "occasion at least a doubting thereof, and consequently make "it unsafe to take an Oath for its establishment," we may on the other side with more reason conclude that "so much "hath been said for it, that, if it serves not to induce an assu- "rance that it is so, may make us forbear covenanting to abo- "lish it, as if we were *de fide*" certain that 'tis as the Assembly of *Divines* represent it to us, *viz.* "[c] not only at best but "a humane Constitution, but a great hinderance also to the "perfect reformation of Religion, yea, an enemy thereunto and

[b] 16. doubt p. 67.

[c] In their exhortation to the taking of the Covenant.

"and destructive to the power of Godliness and pure admini-
"stration of the Ordinance of Christ.

Whereas those *Divines* in the said Exhortation (penn'd as we conceive rather to shew their *Rhetorick*, than give satisfaction to tender Consciences) say *d* "that the extirpation of this "government (standing as yet, by the known Lawes of this "Kingdom) is not only warrantable but necessary, because "the life and Soul thereof (as they are pleased to call it) is "already taken away;" (though we cannot find into what body that Soul hath made a transmigration) we think it no better Argument than to perswade a man that hath lost his Cloake to give away his Coate also. "As for those who desi-
"red a totall abolition of this Government in the Raign of
"Queen *Elizabeth* and King *James* (with whom the well af-
"fected in these dayes do so much correspond in opinion" we leave them under the *Judgment* of the *State* then being. And whereas it is said *e* (by way of anticipation of an objection arising from the "Oath of Canonical obedience) that they that "have sworn Obedience to the Lawes of the Land are not "thereby prohibited from endeavouring by all lawful meanes "the abolition of those Lawes, when they prove inconvenient "or mischievous" We desire it may be considered. 1. That particular Lawes are not of such high consequence, as the whole established frame, and form of *Church-Government* covenanted at once to be demolished. 2. The *King* is not particularly sworn to maintain every individual Law (as he is to preserve this Government) but to govern by Law in general, so far as no new Lawes are to be imposed, nor the old altered without the consent of the Subject (and we see no consent, either of King or those that have a very considerable interest in this Government, to the dissolution of it.) 3. We find no Precedent (amongst us) for the Subjects *ingaging* themselves by *Covenant* to take away such Lawes; whether the *King* would or no. And 4. we shall be very ready to enter into this *Covenant* when we are convinced, that this *Government* is so *inconvenient* and *mischievous*, that it is not capable of a *Reformation*. Lastly, whereas it is said that *f* "an Oath "entred into, not warranted by the Lawes of God and the "Land, calls for repentance, not pertinacy." We conceive it is not applicable to this purpose, for we are sure that *Oath* is

d *England and Scotlands Covenant with God, &c.* p. 34.

e Ibid. 35.

f Ibid.

according to the Lawes of the Land, and therefore dare not charge it to be against the Lawes of God, left we blemish the honour, not only of our learned, Religious, and zealous *Reformers*, but of the *London Divines* also, who (in their first Quere concerning the Oath enjoyned by the late *Synod*) alledging a Counsel under *Charles* the Great, wherein an *Oath* was condemned and casheired, *quia periculosum*: Adde these words "Notwithstanding with Counsel (say they) we do not scruple "the Oath of Canonical obedience time out of mind conti-"nued, and by laudable custome in this Church duly admini-"stred to Ministers taking Institution or receiving Collation "to any benefice, with cure of Soules." It seemes this *Oath* was very silent then, and did not call them (or their Consciences were very sound a sleep and did not hear it call them) to repentance.

4. Some of us stand ingaged in our Relations to *Deanes* and *Chapters*, and though it be said in that exhortation, "that this "Covenant goeth forth in it's own strength with such convin-"cing Evidence of Equity, Truth and righteousnes, as may "raise in all (not wilfully ignorant, or miserably seduced) "inflamed affections to joyn with their Brethren in this happy "Bond." Yet we must profess we are not able to discover by what rule of *Equity* Men should be required by a *Covenant* (wherein they bind themselves to defend the Common *Liberties*) to divest themselves (without any manner of compensation) of those *rights* whereof they are *legally* possessed, and to endeavour the *extirpation* of those *Fraternities*, the *honour* and *Emolument* whereof, they are at their first admission so solemnly *sworn* to preserve, and to do all this to make way for the Introduction and support of other persons not superiour to themselves, either in *abilities* or *desires* to advance piety, and the power of Godlines amongst the People; for when we shall have set our own nests on fire (because others have defiled them) we do much doubt whether every one will prove a *Phœnix* that shall spring out of our Ashes. We think it sufficient for such as stand under those relations to be *silently passive*, or at left to follow in the *reare* by their submission to Authority for the publick Tranquility, and not be required to bind themselves by *Covenant* to become leader and march in the *Van* to the work of their own *Ruine*: We conceive it is thought

as

as unhandſome in point of *Modeſty* to be tendred unto *Biſhops*, as unfit in *diſcretion* to be taken by them, and we hope ſuch of us as are ingaged in an Oath of the ſame validity by our incorporation, into that *Hierarchy*, ſhall upon the ſame grounds of *Equity* obtain the like diſpenſation and Indulgence, and be lookt upon too, with as much favour (if we may not rather call it Juſtice,) as the *prudence* and *Piety* of the *Parliament* that then was (when *Abbyes* and *Monaſteries* were diſſolved) thought fit to allow the *Monks* and *Fryars*, in ſetling a competent *penſion* upon them for their ſubſiſtence during life, and we have the ſtronger grounds for our hopes, becauſe we ſee the Honourable *Houſes* have ordered the *Officers* of the Court of *Wards* a conſiderable allowance for the *Dammage* they ſhall ſuſtain by looſing their places of advantage upon the taking down of that *Court*.

16. *Doubt.*

"Whether the extirpation of Schiſm here covenanted, be "ſutable with other paſſages of this Article?

The Reaſon.

Becauſe (Mr. *Ley* g tell *s* us) Dr. *Willet* thinks there is a *ne-* gp. 28.
ceſſity of the Diſtinction of Biſhops and Prieſts, and ſo of Epiſcopall Government (here *covenanted* to be extirpated) *for the avoiding of Schiſmes*, and if it were not for this *tot eſſent Schiſmata, quot ſacerdotes*. ſaith *Hierome*. So that (in the opinion of thoſe learned Men and many others) while we *Covenant* the extirpation of Schiſm, we do withall *Covenant* the eradication of the moſt powerfull meanes to ſecure us from it.

COVENANT.

"LEſt we partake of other mens Sinn", and thereby be in "danger to receive of their plagues.

17. Doubt.

" Whether this have any reflection upon Church-Govern-
" ment &c. or any deduction at all from thence?

The Reason.

Becauſe it ſeemes to be deduced from that, no leſs than from the extirpation of Popery, which is upon the one hand and ſuperſtition &c. on the other. And we do not conceive how the perſonal faults of Men (ſo much cryed out upon, how truly we know not) can be juſtly charg'd upon their lawfull callings: So that we may (to free our ſelves from partaking of their guilt, as farre as 'tis lawfull for us according to our callings) endeavour the reformation of their Sins: but this is no good ground of entring into *Covenant* to deſtroy their *functions*.

COVENANT.

" And the Lord may be one, and his name one in the three
" Kingdoms.

18. Doubt.

" What is meant by thoſe words?

The Reason.

Becauſe in *Zach.* 14. 9. (which is the only place of *Scripture* where this Phraſe is uſed) it ſignifies nothing elſe but this, that whereas formerly there were many eſteemed and called Gods amongſt the *Gentiles, viz. Jupiter, Apollo, Saturn* &c. yet in the time of *Chriſt* there ſhould be but one God wor-

ſhipt

ſhipt and called upon amongſt them, namely *Jeſus Chriſt*. And in this ſenſe the Lord was *one*, and his *name one all the Chriſtian* world over, when they were farre enough from entertaining any thoughts of the *extirpation* of *Epiſcopacy*. If nothing elſe be meant by this Phraſe but this, that there may be one and the ſame way of worſhipping one and the ſame God in the three Kingdoms, this reaſon had more properly been drawn from *that neareſt connection and uniformity of Religion*, &c. which is covenanted in the firſt Article, and then (though ſet down as a reaſon) it would be a mear *tautologie* and amount to no other ſenſe than this *viz. We ſhall endeavour to have it ſo, that it may be ſo*, which exception we ſhould not have made, had we not found the like in the 7. Quere of the London *Miniſters*.

COVENANT

3. Article.

"We ſhall with the ſame ſincerity, reality, and conſtancy "in our ſeverall vocations, endeavour with our Eſtates and "lives mutually to preſerve the rights and priviledges of Par-"liament, and the liberties of the Kingdoms.

19. Doubt.

"What rights and Priviledges of Parliament are here "meant?

The Reaſon.

Becauſe the Power of *convening* and *diſſolving*, with the exerciſe of a *negative voice* (as occaſion ſhall require) we are ſure to be *priviledges* that wont to be uſed in and about *Parliaments*, and yet we do very much doubt, whether the maintenance of theſe be intended to be taken into *Covenant*.

2. Since our *Proteſtation* of the 5. of *May*. 1641. Theſe

priviledges are grown so big and numerous (beyond our expectation) that we humbly desire a *Catalogue* of them for our further satisfaction, lest we should by an *implicite faith* Covenant to defend *priviledges* (and so for *liberties* too) in a Sense as *bottomless* as an *&c.* For in such a *new* Oath *we cannot be certain* (saith Mr. *Ley*) *without some expres direction (which in this case we find not) how farre the sense of these words* Rights and Priviledges *reacheth, and so we cannot sweare unto it in judgment* (as the Prophet *Jeremy* directeth. *Jer.* 4. 2. "but "at the most in opinion. There is no man would willingly "seale a Bond with a blank for the summe, so that the obli- "ged might make the Debt as large as he listed and we con- "ceive we should be more cautelous in ingaging our Soules "by an Oath, then our Estates by a Bond, since in this the tye "is more vigorous, the breach more dangerous, then it is in "that." Thus Mr. *Ley* Doubt the 11. Pag. 55. *h.*

h Mr. Ley's Doubt 11. p. 55.

3. The twining of a new *Ecclesiasticall Government* into the *Civill* (as we *covenant* in the first Article) and that *so forraign* to it, as fetcht from the *example of other Churches*, must needs infringe the *ancient liberties* of this *Kingdom* (if not of the *Parliament* it self.) The *House of Commons* hath observed this in their *Declaration* of the 17. h. of *Aprill* 1646. wherein they tell us "they could not consent to the granting of an "Arbitrary, and unlimited power and Jurisdiction to near "10000. Judicatories to be erected within this Kingdom, "and this" (though the Proposers doubtless conceived they went according to the word of God and the examples of the best Reformed Churches) "demanded in such away as was "inconsistent with the fundamentall Lawes and goverament "of the same, and by necessary consequence excluding the "Power of the Parliament of *England* in the exercise of that "Jurisdiction." So that the *new* form and frame of Government being so inconsistent with many of our old *Liberties*, We cannot, without interfering, *Covenant* the *introduction* of the one with the *preservation* of the other.

And now we come to reflect upon our *Liberties*, we remember a passage of Mr. *Ley's i* touching the late *Oath* viz. "it is a new burthen (saith he) and (if it should be urged) the "heaviest (in respect of imposition and penalty to some) that "ever was laid on the English Church since it left off, to be Romish.

i 3. Doubt p. 30.

30. Doubt

20. *Doubt.*

" Whether we may Covenant generally, to preſerve the li-
" berties of the Kingdoms?

The Reaſon.

Becauſe, we cannot tell (as the *London Miniſters* in their firſt Quere about that Oath) whether it be contrary to the anſwer of the *petition of Right*; nay, we know it is contrary; for it is one piece of the ſubjects *liberties* (as to have no *new lawes*, ſo) to have no *new Oathes* impoſ'd upon them without their own *conſent*, and the *Authority* of their Soveraign; and (without derogation to the *Repreſentative* body of the *Commons*) this being a *Covenant* that hath ſo much relation to *Religion* (the proper buſineſs of our profeſſion) we cannot think it correſponds with our *liberties*, to have it impoſed upon us without our own *conſent*, expreſſed either by our *ſelves* or by our *Repreſentatives*; and for the " Aſſembly of Divines (by " whoſe concurrent incouragement with the Honourable " Houſes of Parliament, it is ſaid to be commended to us) we having no ſuffrage in their election, they cannot be ſaid to conclude our conſent; and being call'd ſo ſolemnly to aſſert our own *liberties*, and Covenant the *preſervation* of them, we dare not ſo much coaſt upon *perjury*, as to take an Oath, by the very *impoſition* whereof thoſe *liberties* are *infringed*.

k k Exhort to take the Covenant.

COVENANT.

" AND to preſerve and defend the Kings Majeſties perſon
" and Authority, in the preſervation and defence of the
" true Religion and liberties of the Kingdoms, that the world
" may bear witneſs with our conſciences of our loyalty, and
" that we have no thoughts or intentions to diminiſh his Ma-
" jeſties juſt power and greatneſs.

21. *Doubt.*

"Whether this Covenant doth not derogate from his Ma-
"jesties honour and greatnes, one of which is specified in this,
"the other in the sixt Article?

The Reason.

Because 1. it concerns his Majesties *honour* doubtless to uphold that establisht *Government* (being not only not contrary, but most consonant of all others to the sacred word of God) which he so *solemnly swore by his Oath of Coronation* to preserve and maintain.

2. Because as the House of Commons declare (in their answer before mentioned) "it is most evident, that the Rights "and Priviledges of the Parliament and Liberties of the King-"doms are in the first place to be preserved" (we might adde, and to be preserved absolutely, without any relation to Religion and his Majesty, but *Relatively* to these) and yet we know his *Majesty is supream head and Governour over all persons and in all causes as well Ecclesiasticall as Civill*; and for evidence hereof was wont to be set in the *front of all Acts of Parliament*, and so he was in the *protestation* of the 5th. of *May* 1641. But now it seems his *Majesty* is denyed access to his two *Houses* (or any other place) *with Honour, freedom and safety*; [l] and in the *vote* of *Decemb.* 25. concerning his *Majesties* coming to *Holmby-House* (as the *Moderate Intelligencer* [m] tells us) "there were but some words made use of, which are in the "Covenant, and others left out, and after long dispute it was "carryed (only thus farre) that his Majesty have the safety of "his person, in the defence of Religion and liberties accor-"ding to the Covenant." And if he be allowed no *Honour* or *freedome* with his *safety*, we cannot expect to find him invested with the exercise of much *Authority*, which leads us to another doubt.

[l] *House of Commons* Answer p. 13.

[m] Numb. 95. *Friday December* 25.

22. Doubt.

"Whether the preservation and defence of his Majesties "Authority be not inconsistent with other parts of the Cove- "nant?

The Reason.

Because we conceive the King to be the *supream* Governour in his Kingdoms, and 'tis a question very much disputed, whether, when there is a Renitency in the *Supream*, such as are *subordinate* (unless the particular expres lawes and constitution of their Government do warrant them) may attempt the work of Reformation. n *Apud omnes gentes quamvis administratio solennis erat sacerdotum, authoritas tamen summa sanciendæ, reformandæ, vindicandæ religionis semper erat penès Magistratum.* And as well the *Christian* as the *Israelitish* Kings challenge this right unto themselves saith he. And *Hugo Grotius*, o *Ne simulachra quidem falsorum Deorum, quæ publicè extabant, dejecta unquam legimus, nisi jussu, aut populi in liberâ Repub. aut Regum curia regnabantur.*

n Daven. Determ. 49.

o De jure belli. lib. 1. Cap. 4.

If the question be propounded concerning the *extirpation* of formes of Government and worship "reformed and esta- "blisht byLaw, subscrib'd and sworn unto by his Majesty, and "at least a very considerable part of the people," *it would be yet farre more doubtfull, and in such doubtfull cases we are not satisfied how we may sweat with safety,

* See, that Tract. of Resisting the lawful Magistrate under colour of Religion.

Nay, if we preserve the Kings *Authority* (as we are here required to *Covenant*) we cannot endeavour to *extirpate* the *Church Government* according to the second article, nor *abolish* the old form of worship (expressed in the *Leiturgy*) without his *Majesties* consent; for this cannot be done without an *Act of Parliament*, and (although he be bound to do *Acts of Justice* (where this *prerogative* hath not liberty to step in) *according to the law already established* yet) every *Bill* he signes at the instance and in favour of the *Subject* is an *Act of Grace*, to which his *Majesty* is no wayes *obliged*. This the two *Houses*

p Scots papers containing their whole answer to the propositions for peace. p. 27, 28.

have acknowledged: For when the *King* p presseth his *Oath* of Coronation, wherein he promiseth *justas Leges, ac consuedines per eum esse protegendas*, [collection of Remonstra. pag. 268. And p. 290.] He argueth, "can it be imagined that "he should be bound by Oath to pass such lawes, (and such a "Law is the bill they brought to us of the *Militia* (saith he) "as should put the power wherewith he is trusted, out of him-"selfe, in the hands of other men, and divest and disable him "of all possible power to perform the great business of the "Oath, which is to protect them &c.?" Whereunto the *Houses* answer (Page 710.) 'From that argument taken "from the matter of his Oath, that it cannot be meant that the "King should be thereby obliged to divest himself of a power "to protect his Subjects, which is the great business of that "Oath. If he (his Majesty) had said (as we *i. e.* the Houses, "did not) that the King had been bound to pass all Bills, that "should be offered to him by both Houses of Parliament, "without any limitation or qualification of Reason and ju-"stice, yet such a supposition, as this, could not fall upon a "Parliament, [Marke this] as if they could desire such a thing, "much less that a King were obliged for to grant it." This is the language of both *Houses*; and if they intend still according to this *Doctrine* to preserve the *Authority* of his Majesties *Negative voice* in *Parliament*, in denying such *Bills* as are tendred to *Him*, whereof *He* is not satisfyed in point of *Reason* and *justice*, the whole *Covenant* is by this single *branch* rendred frivolous and to no purpose; forasmuch as no man, be his place, vocation, and interest what it will, can lawfully *cooperate* to the accomplishment of those ends and puposes expressed in the *Covenant*, further then *His* Majesties *consent* and *Authority* doth quicken and inable him, and if that *Consent* and *Authority* be obtained, the work will easily be done without a *Covenant*.

But 2. this seems to be contrary to the intentions and resolutions of the two *Houses*, of a latter *Edition* in their publike *Declarations*; for though the King be acknowledged, (upon severall occasions) in former Declarations "to have Authority "in the disposal and ordering of the *Militia* of the Kingdom," yet when the q *Scots* Commissioners prest those Declarations

q The 3. Scots pa-

against

against the proposition concerning the *Militia* (*whereby the Crown* (as those Commoners averre) *is for ever excluded from all interest and right whatsoever*) it was answered by the *Committe* of both Houses, r "That their Declarations were fra- "med, published, and made use of, as their affaires stood then: "but after so much bloud shed by the King, and so much ex- "pence of this Kingdom, they may alter these Declarations "now." Accordingly the House of Commons seems to hold forth a Resolution wholly to divest the Crown of that right, *not judging it wise or safe* [as they say in their Declaration of the 17. of *April.* 1646.] "after so bitter experience of the "bloudy consequences, of a pretended power of the *Militia* "in the King, to leave any colourable Authority in the same "for the future &c. And in their *Answer* s of *Novem.* 28. to the *Scots* Commissioners papers, they declare *three* or *four* severall times, that "the King is not in a condition to exer- "cise the Duties of His place, or to be let to go or reside where "and when he pleaseth, at His own election.

per from page 27. to 39. inclusive.

r *Id.* p. 21.

s p. 8. 31, 45.

From whence we might conclude, it were more requisite, to have a *dispensation* to discharge us from those *Duties*, which we stand already bound, by our *Allegiance* to perform unto His *Majesty* (especially considerng what troubles have threatned some upon a supposition of accommodating Him in His distress) then engage our selves by new obligations to defend that *Authority*, which (the two *Houses* say) *He is not qualified to administer*; and therefore we cannot but extreamly wonder why *this branch* of the *Covenant* is not *expunged*, or at least *the whole suspended* till His *Majesty* be publickly "De- "clared, setled in such a posture as may make Him capable of "that Honour, freedome, and safety, without which He can- "not exercise that Authority, which we are required to Cove- "nant, (and others have covenanted) to preserve and defend "in Him.

If it be replyed that His *Authority* is preserved *in Abstracto*; (besides that His person and Authority are espoused by the *Covenant*, and we bound to preserve them in Conjunction) we are yet very unsatisfied how such an *abstraction* of the *royall Authority* from the *Kings person*, can consist with the *Honour of the King* (which we declare *before God and to all the world* (in the sixt Article of the Covenant) *to be so much concerned in*

this Cause) and whatever *Testimony* is given by our *own Consciences*, or by one another ingaged in the same Case) we do very much doubt, whether the *world* will meet with any temptation, in these proceedings, "to bear witness of our loyalty, and "that we have no thoughts or intentions to diminish His Ma-"jesties just power and greatness.

But the *Assembly* of *Divines* (in their Exhortation to the taking of it) tell us, "This Covenant binds all, and more "strongly engageth them to preserve and defend the Kings "Majesties person, and Authority, in the preservation and de-"fence of the true Religion and liberties of the Kingdoms." yet this gives us no satisfaction, but administers ground for the

23. Doubt.

"What is meant by these words, in the preservation and "defence of the true Religion, and liberties of the King-"doms?

The Reason.

Because *the true Religion* may signifie, that Religion, which stands yet established by the lawes of the Land; (for we suppose no mans forehead is yet grown hard enough to deny that to be *the true Religion*; If they do, we can oppose the several acknowledgments extant, in that book, set forth by Order, called *Englands* and *Scotlands Covenants with their God* &c. Pag. 4. it is acknowledged to be *the true Reformed protestant Religion in his Majesties Dominions established*. p. 6. and 7. 'tis protested to be *maintained with life, power and estate*, as to the Doctrinal part of it. p. 9. they declare a plot for the subversion of the *true Protestant Reformed Religion*. So likewise p. 10. 14. and p. 15. *We Noblemen* &c. of *England, Scotland* and *Ireland* by the providence of God, living under one King, and being of *one Reformed Religion*; and in other places. So that the *Religion* already established is *the true Reformed protestant Religion*, even the *Honsets* themselves being

being Judges. And the *liberties of the Kingdomes* may ſignifie *thoſe liberties* which are egregiouſly manifeſt, being ingraven in the *known lawes of the land* (for we know no liberties without the bounds of eſtabliſht law) and therefore in the *proteſtation* of the fift of *May.* 1641. They are bounded within this Reſtriction, *viz. The lawfull Rights and liberties of the Subject*; (*though Rights and lawfull* be both left out in this *Covenant*, and only the word [*liberties*] of the largeſt ſenſe and latitude retained.)

If we take the words in this ſenſe (and in a ſolemn Oath, we ought to take the words in the moſt plain, Common, and currant ſenſe they can admit of) we have been tempted into a ſtrong opinion, that His *Majeſty* hath ſtood upon *the defence of theſe* all this while, according to his ſundry *proteſtations* upon ſeveral occaſions, and that *the cauſe and Warre* on *His* part (as farre as ever we imagined, and call God to record did never cooperate in it, or wiſh proſperity to it otherwiſe) "was "the preſervation of the true Religion, and liberties of the "Kingdoms (eſpecially the Rights and liberties of a conſide-"rable part of Subjects, *viz.* ſuch as were incorporated into "the Government of the Church, which ſure His Majeſty is "bound to preſerve, unleſs, we would have Him commit in-"juſtice and ſacriledge, and violate His Coronation-Oath, "and the grants of His Royall Predeceſſours, expreſſed in the "very firſt words of our *Magna Charta* thus, we have granted "to God, for us, and our heires for ever, that the Church of "*England* ſhall be free, and have her whole Rights and li-"berties inviolable." We ſay, we conceive, the *cauſe and War* on his *Majeſties* part, was "the preſervation of the true Re-"ligion, and theſe, and all other liberties of the Kingdoms, as "they ſtand eſtabliſhed by law." And His *Majeſty* gave a ſufficient *evidence* of His ſtedfaſt purpoſe and reſolution herein at the *beginning* of this *Parliament*, in that (beſides thoſe aſſurances put into our hands by ſundry *Acts of Grace* paſſed by *Him*) when the foreſaid *Proteſtation* (of *May.* 5. 1641.) "Wherein the true Reformed proteſtant Religion, and law-"full Rights and liberties of the Subject are avowed to be "maintained") was ſent abroad to all the Kingdome, His *Majeſty* gave no ſtop to the taking, and found no exception againſt it, (albeit *He* was then reſident in perſon at *White-*

Hall) it holding forth nothing contrary to his royall *Authority* in the *extirpation* of any fundamentall part of *His setled Government*. And hitherto we have found no mention made of *abolition*, *extirpation*, or *alteration* (saving gracious offers for the satisfaction of His two *Houses*, and *the ease of tender Consciences*) in any of his *Majesties protestations*, *Declarations*, *or Messages*, as we do here in this *Covenant*, and *in the propositions of the two Houses for peace*.

2. We conceive it a piece of the subjects *liberty* to have no new *Oathes* imposed upon them, without their own consent and the *Authority* of their *Soveraign*, and seeing his *Majesty* hath been pleased, (in favour of that *liberty*) expressly to forbid the taking of this *Covenant*, we suppose that this branch of the *Covenant* it self, allowes the equity of our obedience to his *Authority* (to preserve it) in this particular.

Or 2. By *the true Religion*, may be understood that Religion, which is now upon the *anvill* to be reformed, or rather to be contrived, and by *liberties of the Kingdoms*, such *liberties*, as we find not any where extant upon authentik *Records*, but to be declared to us occasionally upon the emergency of new exigents (for the two Houses tell us, *t their Declarations are framed, published, and made use of*, yea and *altered* to according to the severall postures of their affaires:) If this be the sense.

t Scots papers. *ubi supra.*

1. (It is, as if we should adde an *&c.* to the *Covenant*) we know not particularly what that *Religion*, and how many those *liberties* will be, and consequently can neither be satisfied, when it will be our duty to *defend* His Majesties person and Authority, nor how we may with a safe Conscience, take a *new* Oath, that hath such a *bottomless* depth of sense in it.

2. If our care for the preservation of the Kings *Person* and *Authority* be restrained to "the defence and preservation "of the true Religion and liberties of the Kingdoms," and those not *de facto* already established, but *in fieri* to be contrived and determined by our selves, this is no more in effect, then to preserve *Him* so long as *He* complyes with our designs and pleases us; and we conceive the Doctrine of the *Gospel* requires *servants* to be more tender of, more respective and obsequious to their private *Masters*. 1. *Pet.* 2. 17. 18, 19. And his *Majesty* would be worse dealt with, then *Conquerours*

an

are wont to deal by their *vassals*, whose Indulgence it is, (as *H. Grotius* u tells us) *Avita religionis usum* (etiam) *victis nisi persuasis non eripere*: not (against their consent) *to ravish the practise of their ancient Religion from them*, and yet preserve their persons from others violence.

u De jure bel. l. 3. c. 15.

3. Though this *Covenant* be said (by the *Assembly* of Divines) w to strengthen the *Oathes* of *Allegiance* and *Supremacy*, yet that *Oath* admits of no such restriction, nor yet the *Protestation* of *May*. 5. 1641. and we are afraid, it savours to much of *Buchanan*, and *Junius Brutus*, and treades to near the heeles of that detestable doctrine of *King-Killing*, taken up, maintained, and practised by the *Jesuites*, when they find colour to proclaim Princes *Tyrants*, or *Heretical*. And we are a little amus'd that the House of *Commons* should so much insist upon't, x That the *Rights* and *priviledges of the Parliaments*, and *liberties of the Kingdoms*, are in the *first place* to be preserved, and the *King* in his *person* and *Authority* (but) "Relatively, "*viz*. in the preservation and defence of the true Religion and "liberties of the Kingdoms," and seem to take offence y that the defence of the *King* is mentioned by the *Scots-Commissioners*, and those words, [*In the preservation* &c.] left out.

w. Engl. and Scots Cov. p. 36.

x The Answer of Novemb. 28. 1646. to the Scots papers p. 21.

y Id. p. 39.

For that scruple, that this is done without the *Kings* consent, which the *Assembly* think so soon removed, z. we professe we can find no satisfaction at all to our Consciences, in what *they* have delivered touching that particular. For as to the *protestation* of the fift of *May*. 1641. the plain truth is, His *Majesty*, upon perusal, approved the matter of it (as we have been credibly informed) and was so farre from stopping, that he consented by *his* silence to the taking of it. But what warrant is this to Conscience for our ingaging in a *Covenant*, that *He* hath expressly forbidden by *His* publike *Declaration*, and *that* ratified by *His* own exemplary denyall of it?

z *Vbi supra.*

For *Ezra* and *Nehemiah's* examples, a it was with a great deal of caution alleadged, that they drew all the people into a *Covenant* without any *Speciall Commission*: but all the world know, that a *Comission at large*, as it hath more latitude, so it allowes more liberty, for such a worke; and surely if the *Divines* had thought we would have given our selves the leisure to read over those Bookes of *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*, they would never

a Ibid.

never have instanc'd their *examples*.

For *Ezra* we have his *Commission* set down at large Chap. 7. ver. 11. unto the 27. And we believe the Kings *writ* directed to the *Lords* and *Commons*, which relates to *Councells* and *Treaty with the King, concerning the King, the defence of His Kingdom, and of the Church of* England, (the three points which it tends to, as appeares by the writ) will not amount to such a *general Commission*, as gives power "to draw the people "into Covenant to root out that, the defence whereof they "are call'd to consult and treat about." And what were the *contents* of that *Covenant*? It consisted but of *one single Article of Reformation*, and that according to the *Councel of the Lords* and according to the *Law. Ezra.* 10. 3.

For *Nehemiah* he obtained a *Commission* too, which is not set down at large, but only hinted. *Nehem.* 2. 7, 8. and for his *Covenant*, the *several Articles*, or *points* of it are recorded so exactly consonant to Gods *law* [Chap. 10. *v.* 29. to the end] and no way *subversive* of any part of the establisht *Persian Government*, that it seemes to us (not only to imply an extream *barrenness* of *Scripture-proofes* to this purpose, but) to be a wonder how these came to be *quoted* as *presidents* to justify or so much as countenance this *Covenant*, which is imposed so much against the *Rights and liberties of the Subject*, and the Kings command, and obligeth to the *extirpation* of *that Church Government*, which His *Majesty* is solemnly *sworn to maintain*, and which hath been interpreted "universally by "the custome and practice of the whole Christian Church for "more then 1500. yeeres together, consonant to the Apostles "institution, and the sense of the Holy Scripture".

b. Id. p. 37. For those *instances b* in the practice of our own *Princes in confederacy*, and cooperating with the *united provinces* &c. We do not take upon us to dispute how farre it is lawfull for disingaged *States* to pursue their own *Interests*, and make use of advantages to *secure themselves* by breaking the forces of their ill neighbours, whose greatness (if arrived at) is prudently foreseen to threaten them; but we say, we cannot safely draw *their* Actions into example, as if they did warrant the confederacy of *Subjects* to Act against *establisht Law and Government* without the consent of their *Prince*, to whom they owe *Fealty and Allegiance*.

Lastly

Lastly for the practice of our Sister Nation of *Scotland* produced as another leading Case; *c* whereas it is said, that when matters came in cool blood to be debated, it was found adjudged and declared by the *King* in *Parliament*, "That our "dear Brethren of *Scotland* had done nothing, but what be- "come Loyal and obedient subjects:" We do most earnestly beseech Almighty God to reduce this Kingdom unto the same temper, that all matters being debated in *Coole blood*, His *Majesty* may in *Parliament* declare himself to the satisfaction of his people, and we find no obstruction, or scruple of Conscience against our conformity to the Orders of that *Highest Court*.

c Ibid. p. 38.

24. *Doubt.*

"In what sense we do ingage our selves to endeavour with "our estates and lives as in the beginning of the Article?

The Reason.

Because it is controverted, whether it be lawful for the *Ministers* of the Gospel to bear armes (and 'tis not safe to swear in matters, wherein great judgments differ, especially against the safer tenet.) *They* have no train of Artillery to march out with all against *Pagans* and *Persecutors*, but *Prayers and tears*, so that, what *Lactantius* *d* saith of all private persons in the Case of Religion, *viz.* *Defendenda, Religio est a privatis omnibus, non occidendo, sed moriendo; non sævitiâ sed patientia, non scelere sed fide*; We may say the same of all the *Ministers* of the Gospel in all Cases whatsoever; they cannot with confidence, and safety engage their lives but in a way of passive obedience, which is not the way undertaken by this *Article*. This scruple was prevented in the *Protestation* of the 5. of *May*. 1641. by a necessary restriction, no less than thrice repeated, *viz.* "I do promise *&c.* as farre as lawfully I may, "with my life, power and estate, *and again*, To my power, "and as farre as lawfully I may, *and again*, That I shall in "all just, and honourable wayes," which are all left out in this *Covenant*.

d Instit. l. 5. 20.

4. Article.

"WE ſhall alſo with all faithfullneſs, endeavour the diſ-
"covery of all ſuch as have been, or ſhall be Incen-
"diaries, malignants, or evill Inſtruments, by hindering the
"Reformation of Religion, dividing the King from his peo-
"ple &c. that they may be brought to publick triall. &c.

25. Doubt.

"What Incendiaries are here meant?

The Reaſon.

1. Becauſe by *Incendiaries*, (in Common differences,) we do ordinarily underſtand, ſuch as have blown the Coales of diſſention, enflamed the heat of ſtrife, and exaſperated the ſpirits *reſpectively* on both ſides; But we are jealous all ſuch are not intended to be taken into this *Inquiſition* and *diſcovery*, and we have cauſe to believe that what is charged upon one party as *Incendiary*, will be put upon the Accompt of holy *zeale* in favour of the other.

2. We know many perſons very eminent for parts and piety, very zealous againſt all former Innovations and exorbitances, and have all this time ſtood preſt with earneſt deſires, (in a regular way) to promote a thorow Reformation, and yet they may be capable of the Title of *Malignants*, and *evill Inſtruments*, by hindering (accidentally) or rather delaying the late projected *Reformation*, though adhering to his *Majeſty* out of *tenderneſs of Conſcience* only for the *defence of his lawfull Authority* in hindering the extirpation and abolition of ancient formes of Government and worſhip eſtabliſhed by Law: To diſcover, or have any hand in bringing ſuch men as theſe to (*indigne*) puniſhment, were (as we conceive) againſt that

Rule

Rule of natural equity, which is commended to us by the *Law* and the *Prophets*, and admitted into the *Canon* of the *Gospell*. *Mat.* 7. 12. *Luke* 6. 31. and which the *House* of Commons call *That universall Law of a Christian life*, *e* *viz.* To do as we would be done unto.

e The Answer of *Nov.* 28. Scots papers p. 29.

3. Such as have been *Malignants* in the proper sense and Construction of the word, and have pursued the warre on the *Kings* side out of an ambitious design to gain the larger field for the expatiating and satisfying their lusts, may be touch't with remorse, and address themselves to us for our Ghostly Counsell, and the benefit of our prayers, if we should be bound to discover and bring such as these *to condign punishment*, we should make a *snare* of that which troubled Soules are advised, and glad to betake themselves unto, *for Sanctuary*, and we conceive this would be against Christian Charity, which (in such Cases as these especially) *covereth a multitude of Sinns*. 1. *Pet.* 4. 8. Yea, *all Prov.* 10. 12. But we do not instance this as a general *Rule*, for our silence and concealment in all Cases whatsoever, but with reference to this particular.

COVENANT

5. *Article.*

"AND whereas the happiness of a blessed peace between "these Kingdoms hath been lately concluded and set-"led by both Parliaments, we shall each one of us, according "to our place and Interest, endeavour that they may remain "conjoyned in a firm peace and union to all posterity, And "that Justice may be done upon the wilful opposers thereof in "manner expressed in the present Articles.

26. *Doubt.*

"Whether we may sweare this Article?

The Reason.

Becauſe it is all included in that branch of the precedent Article *viz.* "the diſcovery of evill Inſtruments by dividing "one of the Kingdoms from another, and bringing them to "Triall *&c.*" And if it be imply'd, and ſworn in the other, this (according to the opinion of the *London Divines*) ought to be caſhiered, as *ſuperflacus*, that (as to that *Article*) it may not be a *vain* Oath. *Qui abſq; neceſſitate jurat, peccat*, ſay the *Caſuiſts*, which holds in every *part* of an Oath as well as in the whole, ſay they in their third *Quere*.

27. Doubt.

"In Caſe thoſe differences touching the ends, and purpoſes "of this Covenant, and of the Treaty between the two King-"doms, lately on foot and in debate, ſhould be renewed and "proſecuted further between them: Whether we ought to "adhere to that party that our Conſciences tell us do moſt "conform to the Common Rule, and joyn with them in pro-"ſecution of the other (whom) according to the ordinary ſenſe "of the wordes (we do judge to ſwerve from it) as willfull op-"poſers of that peace and union?

The Reaſon.

Becauſe, if it ſhould ſo happen, we might be involved in extream and very perplexed difficulties, (unleſs ſome *Common Rule* be ſet, by the agreement of *both* Nations to determine and direct us herein) for 'tis poſſible the Caſe may ſo fall out, that we muſt act, either againſt our own *Native Kingdome*, which were very grievous, or contrary to the *Light of our Conſciences*, which would be very damnable, or ſit ſtill as *Neuters* which we are required to *Covenant* againſt as deteſtable in the ſixt *Article*.

COVE-

6. *Article.*

"WE shall also according to our places and callings, in this "Common Cause of Religion, Liberty and Peace of "the Kingdoms, assist and defend all those that enter into this "League and Covenant, in the maintaining and pursuing "thereof.

28. *Doubt.*

"Whether the entering into this Covenant being a sufficient warrant and ground to take up Armes for the assistance "of the cause without any further Commission?

The Reason.

Because some things in this *Covenant* (as in the *third* Article) are to be endeavoured *with life, and this* Article saith peremptorily *we shall assist and defend all* &c. without any demurre upon expectance of any further *call or warrant*; and yet the *House* of *Commons* (in their Answer to the Scots papers Pag. 21.) intimate another call requisite to authorize such assistance and defence by these wordes. [*And this every one is to do in his several vocation, and not to intermeddle within each others precincts, but when and so farre forth as they are duely called thereunto*] which *due call* all men have as much reason to expect as our *Brethren* of *Scotland*, being all indifferently under the same obligation of this *Covenant*, and so this *covenanted assistance* of all those that enter into this *League* in the maintaining and pursuing thereof, (without a further *call*) will amount to just nothing, and consequently make it a *vain Oath*, as to this particular, which should not be according to the *London Divines*. f

f ubi supra

"AND ſhall not ſuffer our ſelves *&c.* to be divided and "withdrawn *&c.* But ſhall all the dayes of our lives zea-"louſly and conſtantly continue therein againſt all oppoſition "and promote the ſame *&c.*

29. Doubt.

"How we can ſafely Covenant this perpetual inalterability?

The Reaſon.

1. Becauſe, having ſworn *the preſervation of the reformed Religion in the Church of* Scotland, and here *inalterably*, we ſhall much impeach the freedome of future *Synods*, [ſaith Mr. *Ley* Doubt 17. pag. 79.] "for they that are foreſtalled with "an Oath againſt change cannot be ſo free to change (when "juſt occaſion requireth) as they ſhould be.

"It is an exception made by the Divines of *Aberdene* (ſaith "*He*) againſt the Oath of the Covenant in *Scotland*, That it "taketh away all hope of a free Aſſembly or Parliament to "judge of the matter preſently debated; for how can thoſe "(ſay they) vote freely of any matter propounded to deciſion "and deliberation of the Church and ſtate, who have already "ſworn to adhere to one part of the Queſtion. And pag. 83. "He concludeth, we dare not then take an Oath againſt altera-"tion, leſt therewith, we ſhould forſwear a meet Reformation "of the Church, which any Church may need, that hath leſs "aſſiſtance of the Spirit than the Prophets of the old Teſta-"ment, and the Apoſtles of the new; and of all of them we "muſt hold (ſaith *He*) as the Arch-Biſhop hath very well ſaid "in his Anſwer to the Jeſuit, ſuch an aſſiſtance of Chriſt, and "the holy Spirit, the Prophets under the old Teſtament had, "and the Apoſtles under the new; as neither the high Prieſt "with his Clergy in the Old, nor any Company of Prelates

"or

"or Priests in the new, (since the Apostles,) ever had.

2. Perhaps we may discover a greater *light* held forth to us, than we have beheld hitherto (and we would be loath to preclude our selves from the means of our own proficiency in grace and holiness,) and by that time we have examined throughly the "Gospel Doctrine of Meekness, gentleness, humbleness "of mind, patience, long-suffering, taking up the Cross, and "suffering for righteousness sake," we may possibly change our mindes, and think of some better way to advance the *Gospel*, with a *thorow Reformation*, and Propagate the *Church*, then by "seeding and watering of it with the blood of our "Christian Brethren." The assembly *g* of *Divines* have admonished us that if there should any *Oath* be found "into which "any Ministers or other have entred, not warranted by the "lawes of God and the land, in this Case they must teach "themselves and others, that such Oathes call for repentance "not pertinacy in them." So that had we no other exception against this *Covenant*, the *resolute constancy* absolutely undertaken in it were a sufficient motive to the making a stop, and pawse at it, lest (though we should find never so many flawes in it afterward) *we should* (as one saith they do that take it)* *bind our selves from repentance.*

g Exhortation to take the Covenant.

* A view of the new Directory.

30. Doubt.

"Whether, if we should thus sweare, we should not be in-"tangled with contradiction to our Governours?

Mr. *Ley* p. 85.

The Reason.

Because "we are bound in duty to yield our consents to "their lawfull Constitutions (saith Mr. *Ley*) *h* though with some "alteration, which we can have no heart to do, if we have "sworn to the contrary.

h His 19. Doubt p. 85.

"Hereto some except and say, if they alter, we may alter "with them; But this we conceive (saith *He*) to be too much "fickleness and levity, and liker to the Gipsy play of fast and "loose, than to the grave, and sollid asseveration which be-

"longeth

" longeth to an Oath. Thus He; if this premiſſory clauſe [that
" we ſhall all the dayes of our lives zealouſly and conſtantly
" continue therein againſt all oppoſition &c.] be ſworn abſo-
" lutely, ſo as no revocation or alteration made herein [ſay the
" *London Divines* in a like Caſe, *Quere* the 4.] by his Majeſty
" in or out of Parliament at any time (if there ſhall be cauſe
" ſo to do) ſhall make us conſent to ſuch an alteration, we
" think this (ſay they) to be contrary to the Oathes of Alle-
" giance and Supremacy, and a binding of our ſelves to reſiſt
" Authority, if any alteration ſhall be hereafter made upon
" any reaſon whatſoever." If it intend only to bind us till ſuch an alteration be made, why is it ſo peremptorily ſaid, *that we ſhall all the dayes of our lives* &c. which in ordinary conſtruction is for perpetuity, and admits of no termination, unleſs it be expreſſed. And albeit *Caſuiſts* (ſay they) " tell
" us that ſuch an Oath (if not limited ſo in termes) bindes
" not, if the Government be altered by Authority, yet they
" dare not acquit him of raſhneſs and ſinne who doth not in
" ſwearing ſo limit his wordes, as that ſuch a limitation be
" clearly expreſſed." Thus thoſe *Divines*.

Object. " But in refuſing of the Oath now, for fear of fu-
" ture diſobedience, we diſobey for the preſent. To which
" we ſay (ſaith Mr. *Ley*) That our not ſwearing is no preſent
" diſobedience, becauſe our Conſciences cannot conſent to
" ſweare, and they that require the Oath would not have us
" to ſwear againſt our Conſciences; for one condition ex-
" preſſed in it is," that we make it in the preſence of *Almigh-ty God* the ſearcher of all hearts, with a true intention to per-form the ſame, as we ſhall anſwer at that great Day &c.
" Nor do we conceive, that the premiſſes duly conſidered, they
" would have us to ſwear.

" Secondly, our not ſwearing in this Caſe (ſaith *He*) is ra-
" ther an obedience to our Superiours, becauſe we have alrea-
" dy ſworn to their Authority and power for ſuch alterations,
" both for the preſent, and for their heires, and ſucceſſors; and
" ſo our Promiſſory Oath in this Caſe (if we ſhould take it)
" would be with certain prejudice to another mans right, and
" conſequently could not be attended with Juſtice, and the
" prejudice would be more unjuſt becauſe done to the right of
" publick and Soveraign Authority." Thus Mr. *Ley* Doubt 19. page 87.

31. *Doubt.*

" Whether things being once ſetled according to this Cove-
" nant, any alteration may be made hereafter by either of the
" Kingdoms apart?

The Reaſon.

Becauſe the firſt Article ingageth into " the neereſt Con-
" junction and Uniformity, *&c.* the fourth unto the diſcovery
" of all ſuch as have been, or ſhall be evil Inſtruments by divi-
" ding one of the Kingdomes from another, and the perſecuti-
" on of them unto tryalll and condign puniſhment: The
" firſt, that they may remain conjoyned in a firm peace and U-
" nion to all Poſterity; and in the ſixt *to aſſiſt and defend* all
" thoſe that enter into this League in the purſuing thereof, not
" to be divided from this bleſſed Union and Conjunction,
" whether by defection, or neutrality, but all the dayes of our
" lives zealouſly and conſtantly to continue therein againſt all
" oppoſition." By which it ſeems the two *Kingdomes* have *mutually* a *joynt Conſent*, and a *Negative Voice* at leaſt, as touching all future *alterations* that ſhall be thought convenient to be made by either of them: And yet the *Houſe of Commons* do utterly diſclaim it (in their *i* anſwer of *Novemb.* 28. 1646. to the papers of the Commiſſioners of *Scotland*) in theſe words: *We ſhall now appeal to the Conſciences of our Brethren of* Scotland, *and of all thoſe who have taken or read this Covenant or Treaty, if any ſuch Conſtruction* (*viz.* as the Commiſſioners of *Scotland* underſtood them in and pleaded for) *can be made out of them, or any of them; or whether it would ever have entred into the thoughts of the free-born people of this Kingdome to have made ſuch a Covenant or Treaty, which might any way bear ſuch an Interpretation ſo deſtructive to their freedomes, as to introduce another Nation to be one of the Eſtates of this Kingdome, and to have a Negative Voice in all things concerning their welfare.* i pag. 13.

"longeth to an Oath. Thus He; if this premiſſory clauſe [that "we ſhall all the dayes of our lives zealouſly and conſtantly "continue therein againſt all oppoſition &c.] be ſworn abſo-"lutely, ſo as no revocation or alteration made herein [ſay the "*London Divines* in a like Caſe, *Quere* the 4.] by his Majeſty "in or out of Parliament at any time (if there ſhall be cauſe "ſo to do) ſhall make us conſent to ſuch an alteration, we "think this (ſay they) to be contrary to the Oathes of Alle-"giance and Supremacy, and a binding of our ſelves to reſiſt "Authority, if any alteration ſhall be hereafter made upon "any reaſon whatſoever." If it intend only to bind us till ſuch an alteration be made, why is it ſo peremptorily ſaid, *that we ſhall all the dayes of our lives* &c. which in ordinary conſtruction is for perpetuity, and admits of no termination, unleſs it be expreſſed. And albeit *Caſuiſts* (ſay they) "tell "us that ſuch an Oath (if not limited ſo in termes) bindes "not, if the Government be altered by Authority, yet they "dare not acquit him of raſhneſs and ſinne who doth not in "ſwearing ſo limit his wordes, as that ſuch a limitation be "clearly expreſſed." Thus thoſe *Divines*.

Object. "But in refuſing of the Oath now, for fear of fu-"ture diſobedience, we diſobey for the preſent. To which "we ſay (ſaith Mr. *Ley*) That our not ſwearing is no preſent "diſobedience, becauſe our Conſciences cannot conſent to "ſweare, and they that require the Oath would not have us "to ſwear againſt our Conſciences; for one condition ex-"preſſed in it is," that we make it in the preſence of *Almigh-ty God* the ſearcher of all hearts, with a true intention to per-form the ſame, as we ſhall anſwer at that great Day &c. "Nor do we conceive, that the premiſſes duly conſidered, they "would have us to ſwear.

"Secondly, our not ſwearing in this Caſe (ſaith *He*) is ra-"ther an obedience to our Superiours, becauſe we have alrea-"dy ſworn to their Authority and power for ſuch alterations, "both for the preſent, and for their heires, and ſucceſſors; and "ſo our Promiſſory Oath in this Caſe (if we ſhould take it) "would be with certain prejudice to another mans right, and "conſequently could not be attended with Juſtice, and the "prejudice would be more unjuſt becauſe done to the right of "publick and Soveraign Authority." Thus Mr. *Ley* Doubt

31. Doubt.

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"nant, any alteration may be made hereafter by either of the
"Kingdoms apart?

The Reason.

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"junction and Uniformity, *&c.* the fourth unto the discovery
"of all such as have been, or shall be evil Instruments by divi-
"ding one of the Kingdomes from another, and the persecuti-
"on of them unto tryalll and condign punishment: The
"first, that they may remain conjoyned in a firm peace and U-
"nion to all Posterity; and in the sixt *to assist and defend* all
"those that enter into this League in the pursuing thereof, not
"to be divided from this blessed Union and Conjunction,
"whether by defection, or neutrality, but all the dayes of our
"lives zealously and constantly to continue therein against all
"opposition." By which it seems the two *Kingdomes* have *mutually* a *joynt Consent*, and a *Negative Voice* at least, as touching all future *alterations* that shall be thought convenient to be made by either of them: And yet the *House of Commons* do utterly disclaim it (in their *i* answer of *Novemb.* 28. 1646. to the papers of the Commissioners of *Scotland*) in these words: *We shall now appeal to the Consciences of our Brethren of* Scotland, *and of all those who have taken or read this Covenant or Treaty, if any such Construction* (*viz.* as the Commissioners of *Scotland* understood them in and pleaded for) *can be made out of them, or any of them; or whether it would ever have entred into the thoughts of the free-born people of this Kingdome to have made such a Covenant or Treaty, which might any way bear such an Interpretation so destructive to their freedomes, as to introduce another Nation to be one of the Estates of this Kingdome, and to have a Negative Voice in all things concerning their welfare.* *i* pag. 13.

" MOst humbly beseeching the Lord to blesse our pro-
" ceedings with such success, as may be safety to his
" people, and incouragement to other Christian Churches,
" groaning under, or in danger of the Yoak of *Anti*christian
" Tyranny; to joyn in the same or like *Association* and Cove-
" nant, to the Glory of God, the inlargement of the Kingdom
" of Jesus Christ, the peace and Tranquility of Christian King-
" domes and Common-wealths.

32. *Doubt.*

" Whether we may make a Covenant to such an end and
" purpose, as is here propounded and specified?

The Reason.

Because it may seem to stir up *Subjects* against their *lawfull Magistrates*, which we cannot invite them unto, by *Covenant* (unless their particular *Laws*, and the Constitution of their *Governments* do allow it; and in that case we presume they shall need no *Invitation*) though they be not only *in danger of the yoak of Antichristian tyranny*, but actually *groan under it*; and though it be designed and undertaken for all those specious ends and purposes there mentioned, *viz.* " The glory of
" God, the inlargement of the Kingdome of Jesus Christ,
" and the peace and Tranquility of Christian Kingdomes
" and Common-wealths. " The Reasons of our *Negative* in this case, are these;

1. Because it is a great Question amongst the Divines of the *Reformed Churches*, whether such a course be lawfull or no.

2. Those that hold the *Affirmative*, when they have said all they can to defend and justifie the practice of it, must conclude

clude to the honour and advantage of a *passive obedience*, with a *Tutissimum*, for tender and scrupled Consciences.

3. 'Tis the course, which the *Turks* and *Jesuits* follow, to advance and propagate their Religion, which may at least give cause enough to draw that practice into Suspition with us.

4. It hath no warrant in the *Gospell*, but

5. Is contrary, (1.) to the Doctrine thereof expreſt (1.) in the *eighth Beatitude*, *Mat.* 5. 10, 11, 12. 1. *Pet.* 3. 14. and Cap. 4. 12, 13. (2.) in the *Precept* of *taking up the Crosse*, *Mat.* 10. 38. *Cap.* 16. 24. *Mar.* 8. 34. *Luke* 9. 23. 1. *Pet.* 2. 13. &c. [3] contrary to the example of *Christ* and his Disciples. *Heb.* 12. 2, 3. 2. *Tim.* 3. 12. 1. *Pet.* 2. 20. *ad fine.* *k* "Christ and his Disciples were of all the Doctors that "ever were in this world, the most carefull to preserve the Doctrine and practice of *A*llegiance, even when the Emperours were the greatest oppoſers of the Christian Religion.

k D. *H.* app. to pract. *Cat. addit.* 18. pag. 60. Edit. 2. Print. *London.*

6. Though the scope we aim at be the "advancement of "Gods Glory, and the inlargement of the Kingdome of Jesus "Christ, ,, yet (if it be unlawfull as we conceive) *we must not only do evill that good may come. Rom.* 3. 8. And though they be *under the yoak of Antichristian tyranny*, they should not "be afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; but sanctifie "the Lord God in their hearts. For it is better, if the will of "God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evill doing; 1. *Pet.* 3. 14. 15. 17. *l* But let none of you suffer as "a murderer, or as a Thief, or as an evill doer, or as a busie "body in other mens matters. 1. *Pet.* 4. 15.

l And they should apply unto themselvs that of the *Apostle*

Phil. 1. 28, 29. *And in nothing terrified by your adversaries; which is to them a evident token of perdition, but to you of Salvation: and that of God. For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.*

" MOst humbly beseeching the Lord to blesse our pro-
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Of the interpretation of this Covenant.

33. Doubt.

"How the Doubts of the Covenant may be resolved and "cleered?

The Reason

Because (we are of Mr. *m Ley*'s opinion) "Oaths must be "taken, according to the mind and intention of that Autho- "rity, which doth exact them; ,, And no private person can warrant us what is the *mind* and *intention* of that Authority; neither may we expound the Oath for our selves, and take it in that sence, which we think is most *Favourable*, either with reference to *our selves*, or to those who *impose* it; for in that Case they cannot securely rely upon our Ingagements.

m Pag. 96. to 102.

Dr. *Burges* indeed made an interpretation of his own Subscription; *n* but there had been no validity in it (as we conceive) unless it had been allowed by the Superiour powers, and so it was: For (as he saith) "It was accepted by King "*James*, and the Archbishop of *Cante bury* affirmed it to "be the true sence and meaning of the *Church* of *England*.

Ibid.

And "if we should take the Oath, [Covenant] and a "Notary publick record it, unless our exposition of it were "publickly and lawfully (for favourably is not sufficient) both "allowed and recorded also, we may haply be charged with "the crime of perjury; and unable fairly and effectually to "free our selves from that charge, unless by Authority we were "permitted to conclude our Oath with the antient clause of "Limitation, *viz.* ,, so far as agreeth with the sacred Scripture, with the Civil and Ecclesiasticall Laws of this King-

dome, as farre as our Liberties will afford. Thus Mr. *Ley*. See Pag. 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101,

We will conclude this in the Language of Mr. *Ley*: changing but one word, *viz.* the word *Oath*, for the word *Covenant*. o "Thus much for our Doubts; which if any think too much (saith he) it may be he thinks too little of the peace of Conscience, the price of our Ministry in danger to be lost, and the pressure and misery, which by many may be felt by occasion of that Covenant: which though we dare not take, yet we dare swear, and can do it heartily, willingly, and truly, that (as we conceive of the *Covenant*) we can with sound Faith, and safe Conscience yeild unto it.

o P. 108, 109, 110.

"And if most of those Doubts, before proposed, should be found to be frivolous (which we do not conceive of any one of them) and but one of them contain a just ground of ambiguity, that one is enough, while we are in *suspense* concerning the meaning of the *Covenant*, to suspend our assent from the taking thereof: For the Comparison (brought in by the prudent Composer of the History of *Trent*) we take to be true, and of much importance to this purpose, which i" As one particular maketh false the contradictory Universall; so one ambiguous particular, makes the universall to be ambiguous.

"If any man, but of a private condition like unto our selves, have a mind to make answer to our Doubts and Reasons, we wish him to consider at what he aimeth in that undertaking: If to ingratiate himself into the favour of those who approve of the *Covenant*; we desire not to cast in any prejudice to his expectation; if to satisfie us, we fear his endeavours are like to be fruitlesse, since he cannot advance his discourse above probability, and for that we may return upon him like Topicall *Arguments*: and so the consistence of the Cause (at the best) will be but a problem, which will administer but weak incouragement for a sincere, willing, and hearty taking of a *Covenant*. Thus Mr. *Ley*.

Our Hopes and the Reaſons thereof.

Firſt, Our Hopes.

Our Doubts and Reaſons hitherto handled, we hope will aſſure the Honourable Houſes, and the *Aſſembly* (by whoſe concurrent encouragement, this Covenant is commended to us) "that our not taking it, ought not to be aſcribed to contumacy, but to Conſcience; (*as Mr.* Ley *p in like caſe*) and then "we hope again (the caſe ſtanding as it doth) that they will "neither preſs upon us to take it, nor (*to go on in Mr.* "Ley's *words*) oppreſſe us with any penalty, if we take it "not.

p. 111. and to 124.

Our Reaſons.

"For this we conceive, we have both ſolid Reaſons, and "ſacred Examples: and thoſe ſuch, as (*being taken up from Mr.* "Ley) we preſume their wiſdome and goodneſſe will not diſ-"eſteem.

Our Reaſons are grounded on
1. *Piety.*
2. *Charity.*
3. *Equity.*
4. *Policy.*

1. On Piety.

For the firſt; as they have undertaken the great work of a Generall *Reformation*, they have ingaged themſelves (as much as

as in them lyeth) to ſecure others from the peril of ſin, whether *Preacher or People*: and firſt for *Preachers*, to take care that they do not take any Dangerous Oaths. Ley, P. 112.

For which Cauſe Mr. *Ley* will furniſh them with the Example of *St. Baſil*, who was very zealous in behalf of Biſhops, *that they might not be put to ſwear, in reſpect of the peril of an Oath.* And the Councel of *Challons* (he tells us) was as reſpective of Presbyters. And the *Triburienſian* Councel, having a reſpect both to their credits and Conſciences, made a Cautelous Conſtitution, "That a Presbyter ſhould not be "compelled to ſwear; but inſtead of an Oath, he ſhould be "queſtioned upon his holy conſecration" (*i.e.* as it is probable ſaith Mr. *Ley*) *in verbo Sacerdotis*, becauſe, as the reaſon is there rendred, our Lord forbade his Diſciples to ſwear.

For the practice of *Geneva* in taking an Oath, which was an Objection Mr. *Ley* made againſt himſelf then, and may be objected againſt us now: We ſay (but what we ſaid at the beginning) we are not ſo weary of our old, as to take a *Covenant* to give ſtrength to any new invented Government.

"The other particular more eſpecially *(to uſe Mr.* Ley *ſtill)* reſpecteth the piety of the people, whoſe conſciences are like, "as he ſaith, to be carefully guided by ſuch Divines, as are chary of their own. Of whoſe Miniſtry (if they ſhould be de-"prived) it is not like, that generally there would be found a "ſupply to countervail the loſſe of their Religious labours, and "exemplary practice, the two chief Helps to holineſſe of life: "and we conceive it a point of piety, and a caſe of conſcience "worthy of the grave and godly conſideration of the *two Hou-"ſes and Aſſembly* to reſolve, whether, becauſe in this caſe we "dare not *Covenant*, God will reject our ſervice in his Sanctua-"ry, if not, why ſhould they? While God is pleaſed (*to go on in* Mr. Ley's *words*) "as we hope he is, to accept our endeavours "to glorifie his Name, and edifie his Flock: We truſt it will "not be held any part of godlineſſe with the Paſtorall ſtaffe (*no, nor yet with the Presbyterian Scepter*) "to drive any faithfull "Paſtour from the Fold of *Chriſt*.

2. On

2. *On Charity.*

P.116. Secondly, (following Mr. *Ley*'s ſteps ſtill, and his words too) *we ground our Hopes upon* the two Houſes and the Aſſemblies *Charity*, whereof the Fundamentall rule in the affirmative part is, ſ *To do unto all men, as we would they ſhould do unto us*: And in the Negative, *not to offer that to others, which in the like caſe our ſelves would not ſuffer.* And we doubt not but they would be loath that *their fear of offence againſt God, and their Conſciences*, ſhould be ſo ſeverely puniſhed, as in many it hath been, *who are afraid to take this Covenant*: And if they look upon us without reflecting upon themſelvs, *We truſt* (as Mr. *Ley* ſtil hath it) that for this, after our long ſtudious endeavours in the Univerſity, wherein ſome of us have ſpent our patrimonies (which might have maintained us in another courſe, without Eccleſiaſticall means) after our conſtant and painfull imployment in our Paſtorall charges, even to the tying out of our ſtrength, after our families are increaſed beyond our abilities to ſupport them, without the meanes we receive from the Church; and for many of us we may ſay but poorly with it, though we deſire not to be releived with the ſpoil of others, *after all this we truſt they will not*, by preſſing this Covenant upon us; put us upon the poor refuge of the Canon of the Council of *Carthage* (made for inferiour and ſingle Clerks) to labour in Husbandry, or Manufactures for our maintenance; Swear we dare not, dig we cannot: We were no Fiſher-men, nor Tent-makers, or other Artificers, before we entred upon the Holy Calling, and to beg we are aſhamed: And we may be alſo afraid, ſince by the Law, begging Scholars, are no better than Rogues, and ſo to be ſeverely puniſhed, rather than Charitably releived; what then ſhall we do?

ſ *Mat.* 7. 12.

Mr. *Ley* goes on and tells us, two or three pages together, what ſtrong obligations lye upon Biſhops to be mercifull; We hope mercy is not thrown with them out of the two Houſes.

3. *On*

3. On Equity,

Thirdly (to proceed with Mr. *Ley*) *we have some hope in their equitable justice*, that we ſhall not be ſo ſeverely dealt with, as hath been threatned to us, and executed upon others: *For, if we do offend in forbearing of the* Covenant, *diſtinction muſt be made by the degree of a generall Councell* (ſaith Mr. *Ley*) † *betwixt thoſe that* of ſet purpoſe offend, and thoſe that offend by a kind of neceſſity: "As where our Conſciences put in excep- "tions asbars, at leaſt as demurs to obedience; and if we deſerve "any cenſure in ſuch a caſe, it is not deprivation (*ſaith he*) which "our Eccleſiaſticall Laws call" cruel and an horrible weapon, which deſtroyeth or undoeth the whole man; for that is reſerved for heynous crimes of greateſt and foulеſt guilt; *Which in particular* (ſaith he) *are noted by* Duarenus, *the Civilian to be* the Simonaical ambition, incontinency keeping of a Concubine ſo pertinaciouſly, that the offender being duely admoniſhed, will not forſake her; Perjury, Murder, Treaſon, or ſome other grievous offence (*as Hereſie*) which is followed by infamy; whereby infamy *he meaneth* (*as himſelf expounds it*) *not* that which ariſeth from the mis-conceit of men, but that which proceedeth from the ſentence of the Law: *None of all which can* (to uſe Mr. *Ley*'s words) "with any colour of truth, be im- "puted to our Doubting or finall deniall of the Covenant, "while the dictate of our Conſciences induceth us to do ſo.

† p. 130.

4. On Policy.

Fourthly, in *Religious Policy*, the two *Houſes* and *Aſſembly* may (*with as much advantage to themſelves as to us*) forbear the urging of this Covenant; For what ever ſuch ſay, as hope to eſtabliſh their own ambition, the *Presbyterians*, if they have not added to the number of their enemies, have yet loſt many

friends; and withall (to use Mr. *u Ley's* words) have thereby *raised a suspition, that themselves do doubt their* Government and *dignity is not set upon a sure foundation. It is cause of jealousie to many* (they are Mr. Ley's words) „ when such as are „ reputed politick, are too Cautelous in their own Cause; and „ for that was *Novatianus* the Father of the Puritans [saith he] „ the worse thought of, because he caused his Adherents to put „ their hands betwixt his, and to swear by the Body and bloud „ of the Lord, they would not forsake him, and turn to *Cor-* „ *nelius*: And this he did before he would give them the *Sa-* „ *crament*;" But besides, that such a forced Confederacy is but frail [saith he] *w By this* [making a Faction against *Cornelius*] *his Episcopacy was the more suspected, to be both unlawfull and Schismaticall.* It hath fallen out so in many mens conceits of the right & Authority of the Pre-byterian Government, both since and by occasion of this Covenant. And the *Assembly* [if they subscribe to *Mr. Ley's* Rule] „ cannot more „ readily redeem their reputation, than by a speedy procuring „ of a repeal or revocation thereof" by that Authority that did impose it.

u P. 128.

w Ibid.

„ Wherein if they appear and prevail, they need not fear a- „ ny disparagement to their prudence, by withdrawing that „ they have decreed, since [*as Mr. Ley x will tell them*] the wi- „ sest States-men, and greatest Governours have used many „ times, to comply so far with popular dispositions, as to vary „ their own Acts with relation to their liking, as the Pilot doth „ his Sailes, to comply with the winds. Thus Mr. Ley.

x P. 129.

We need not lead the two Houses out of their own doors, to shew them an example to induce them to this; and we hope the *Assembly* will improve their interest with them to that purpose, that we may be able to say in Commendation of them, what his Majesty said; *whose word neither in duty, nor discretion we may distrust* [saith Mr. *Ley*] to the honour of the Prelates, with reference to his *Scottish* Subjects, *viz.* „ That the Prelates were their greatest friends, „ their „ Councels were alwayes Councels of peace, and their Solici- „ tations vehement & earnest, for granting those unexpected „ favours, which we were pleased to bestow upon our people.

To

To ſum up all, That we may give the Reader no further trouble or importunity, we deſire but theſe three things of him.

The firſt is,

To *Reconcile* [if it be poſſible] theſe *parts* of the *Covenant* to one another.

1. The Reformation of the Church-Government and worſhip in the Kingdomes of *England* and *Ireland*, to the *extirpation* and *abolition* of them.

2. The *Preſervation and defence of the Kings Authority*, to the *impoſition* of a Covenant againſt His *Laws* and eſpeciall *Proclamation*.

3. The *Preſervation and defence of his Majeſties honour and Greatneſs*, to the *amputation of that Church-Government*, and thoſe *Church Rights*, which he is ſworn to preſerve unto the Church inviolable.

4. The *Preſervation and defence of the Liberties of this Kingdom*.

1. To the *impoſition* of a *Covenant* againſt the *Petition of Right*.

2. To the *violation* of the *Rights* and *Liberties* of the *Church of England*, which are eſtabliſhed by the firſt words of *Magna Charta*.

3. To the Introduction of a new form of *Church-Government*, which is forraign to, and *inconſiſtent* with many of thoſe *Liberties*, *&c.*

4. To that *neareſt Conjunction and uniformity in Religion*, &c. to the Church of *Scotland*, and that to remain [which excludes all *liberty* of alteration for the future in the Kingdome and *Church of England*] to *all poſterity*. Coven. *Artic.* 2. 5.

The ſecond is,

To remember.

1. That one main Reaſon alledged in the Preface to the Directory, *Why the Common Prayer Book was taken away*, is, becauſe „ by means thereof [*as they ſay*] the conſciences of

" many both Miniſters and people were diſquieted, divers able
" and faithfull Miniſters debarred from the exerciſe of their
Miniſtry [to the indangering of many thouſand ſoules, *&c.*] and
" ſpoiled of their lively-hood, to the undoing of them and their
" families. " Hath not the *Covenan* occaſioned as much? where
-s the care that was promiſed, and ſhould now be had of tender
Conſciences?

2. *Theſe poſitions* (*the grounds of many of our Doubts*)

1. That " a promiſory Oath with prejudice to another mans
" Right, cannot be attended with uſtice, and the prejudice is
" the more unjuſt, when done to the Right of the publick and
" Soveraign Authority [that is, as is intimated a little before]
y p. 87. " to the *Authority of the King, his Heires and Succeſſors.* Mr.
Ley. y

2. That there is *ſomewhat in the calling of Biſhops Divine and Apoſtolicall*, acknowledged by Dr. *Willet*, *Ibid.* p. 67. And Mr. *Ley* himſelf, at the beginning of this *Parliament*, allowed their Government; In *a meet and moderate imparity.* 16 p. 20. which appears further in

3. That *He* and his *Brethren* ingaged in the ſaid *Doubts, &c. think it more reaſonable to require* Geneva to receive ſome *Doctrines from us, then we diſcipline from them.* 16 p. 113.

4. That " the Oath of Canonicall obedience, hath been time
" out of mind continued, and by laudable cuſtome in this
" Church duly adminiſtred to Miniſters, " *&c. Lond. Divines. quer.* 1. If the cuſtome of adminiſtring that Oath was *Laudable*, what ſhall we think of their *practice* that break that cuſtome, and that Oath too, having taken it?

The third and laſt is,

To ſtrengthen (by his Prayers) our Hopes which are,

Raiſed upon four pillars, { *Piety.* *Charity* *Equity.* *Policy.* }

An

An additionall Poſtſcript touching ſuch as yet remain unſatisfied and Seditious.

THE Reader is deſired to take notice of the verſatile humour and inconſtancy of theſe men: One while they profeſs (as was obſerved above) that they can allow a meet and moderate imparity *of Biſhops; and conſequently, they ſay they do not ſcruple the* Oath of Canonicall obedience *time out of mind continued, and by laudable cuſtome duly adminiſtred to Miniſters taking* Inſtitution, *or receiving* Collation *to any Benefice with* Cure of Soules. *That they take all things* neceſſary to Salvation, *to be contained in the* Articles of Religion, *as grounded on Holy Scripture; and in the preſence of Almighty God, have promiſed, vowed, and proteſted to maintain and defend the true* Reformed Proteſtant Religion, *expreſſed in the* Doctrine *of the Church of* England, *&c. But awhile after, that* Order *of* Biſhops, *muſt be rooted out, and that* Oath *retracted, and that* Doctrine *reformed: And this muſt be urged upon us by a* Solemn League and Covenant, *contrary to former* Oathes and ſubſcriptions, *and the expreſs* Interdiction *of our Soveraign.*

Pa. 16 & p. 17. They acknowledg this Government to ſtand by the Lawes of this Kingpom. p. 18. p. 19.

Ibid.

Reſons ſhewing the neceſſity of reforming, &c.

I deſire theſe men to remember their own poſition, That an Oath *entred into, not warranted by the* Laws *of* God *and the Land, call for repentance, not pertinacy.* p. 17.

Upon which principle I assume; This Covenant *is warranted by the Laws of God, and the Land, or it is not: If it be warranted by those Laws, then we may lawfully play the old game over again; seize the Kings* Magazines, *exercise his* Militia *against his will; Levy an* Army, *summon all men to bring in their* Plate *&c. to maintain it, sequester such as refuse to lend their contribution; fight, besiege and imprison his* Majesties *Royall person,* &c. *unless he yield unto our demands, then are we not favoured by the* Act of Indempnity and Oblivion, *but defamed and injured by it, as implying our guilt and liableness to punishment.*

But if this Covenant *be unwarrantable by the said* Laws, *then let these men bring forth fruits* meet for Repentance; *for by their fruits we shall know them, and we may understand their sence, by the complaint of the* Lord Chancellor, *in his late Speech of* Septemb. 13, *where he saith, That his* Majesty *receives frequent informations of Seditious Sermons in the* City, *and in the* Country, *in which all industry is used to alienate the affections of the people, and to infuse jealousies into them of the King and his Government; They talk of introducing Popery, of evill* Counsellors, *and such other old Calumnies as are pardoned by this Act* of Indempnity. *I shall adde no more but this.*

P. 17.

Unhappy is that State, that is concerned to make concessions to such a party, as nothing can satisfie, more unhappy that people, that relyes upon such persons as have no solid ground to bottom on. Most unhappy those persons, who instead of being touched with true remorse, expect to be gratified for their misdemeanors.

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